






Ethical-moral teaching strategies in Nursing students' training: an integrative review*

Estratégias de ensino ético-moral na formação de estudantes de Enfermagem: revisão integrativa

How to cite this article:

Barrientos MIT, Schneider DG, Mazera MS, Sandoval SJA, Bustos EMA. Ethical-moral teaching strategies in Nursing students' training: an integrative review. Rev Rene. 2024;25:e94130. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15253/2175-6783.20242594130>

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*Extracted from a thesis to be presented "Formación ético moral de estudiantes de Enfermería en la Universidad de Magallanes Chile: estudio de caso", Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 2024. (The thesis will be presented on December 17th, 2024).

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Conflict of interest: the author has declared that there is no conflict of interest.

EDITOR IN CHIEF: Ana Fatima Carvalho Fernandes
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Francisca Diana da Silva Negreiros

ABSTRACT

Objective: to synthesize the diverse scientific evidence about ethical-moral teaching strategies in Nursing students' training. **Methods:** an integrative review with search and selection of primary studies in six renowned data sources from the Health field, namely: Web of Science, MEDLINE/PubMed, CINAHL/EBSCO, LILACS, BDNF and SciELO, between 2018 and 2023. **Results:** the sample was comprised by 18 studies, selected from a universe of 784 articles. Two categories were generated after integrating the studies on Nursing students' ethical training; these categories associated strengthening the undergraduate students' knowledge, skills and attitudes and ethical-moral educational strategies. **Conclusion:** in Nursing training, it is necessary to encourage the development of moral skills and attitudes such as moral sensitivity, empathy, moral resilience and reasoning and ethical decision-making, as well as to incorporate professional values. **Contributions to practice:** this study contributes ethical-moral strategies for the development of ethical-moral skills in Nursing and to consolidate diverse knowledge and skills for ethical, humanistic and socially committed performance, involved with social justice and with defending life.

Descriptors: Ethics; Students; Nursing; Curriculum; Nursing.

RESUMO

Objetivo: sintetizar evidências científicas sobre estratégias de ensino ético-moral na formação de estudantes de enfermagem. **Métodos:** revisão integrativa com investigação e seleção de estudos primários, em seis bases de dados de destaque na área da saúde: *Web of Science*, MEDLINE/PubMed, CINAHL/EBSCO, LILACS, BDNF, SciELO, de 2018 a 2023. **Resultados:** a amostra foi composta por 18 estudos selecionados de um universo de 784 artigos. A integração dos estudos de formação ética em estudantes de enfermagem gerou duas categorias, associando o fortalecimento de conhecimentos, habilidades e atitudes dos estudantes em formação e estratégias educacionais ético-morais. **Conclusão:** na formação em enfermagem é necessário incentivar o desenvolvimento de habilidades e atitudes morais, como sensibilidade moral, empatia, resiliência moral, raciocínio moral, tomada de decisões éticas e agregação de valores profissionais. **Contribuições para a prática:** este estudo contribui com estratégias de ensino ético-morais para o desenvolvimento de competências ético-morais na enfermagem e para a consolidação de conhecimentos e competências para uma atuação ética, humanística, socialmente comprometida, envolvida com a justiça social e a defesa da vida.

Descritores: Ética; Estudantes de Enfermagem; Currículo; Enfermagem.

Introduction

In 21st century societies and as a consequence of multiple changes and transformation, the dramatic progress of sciences and the profound social changes in all scopes faced by societies every day, Nursing as a profession should be duly prepared to provide effective answers, with scientific knowledge and ethical-moral training⁽¹⁾. Ethical-moral education in Nursing is an essential aspect that guides the students' training, and the relevance of this topic was the reason to select it as the main focus of this study.

Ethics is related to the self and implies a reflection that is translated into individual actions whereas moral refers to duty, a norm of a universal nature and, therefore, a collective responsibility issue. In this sense, ethics implies questioning and assessing the quality of our actions and suggests behaviors based on our own values; in turn, moral establishes behavioral models based on rules. Nevertheless, regardless of the concepts of ethics and moral, it is undoubted that both of them exert a profound impact on us, guided towards the purpose of promoting harmonious and socially fair human relationships⁽²⁾.

Nursing ethics regulates the behaviors in practicing the profession, the principles guiding such behaviors, the motivations and values inherent to the professional practice and the adaptation to changes and transformations in societies over time; all according to the ethical guidelines and to the recommendations stated in the Nursing Ethics code, which is constantly updated to be in line with the current context needs⁽³⁾.

The Nursing profession has experienced continuous evolution driven by the need to adapt to growing social demands and overcome health-related challenges. In this process, significant contributions have been made not only in terms of knowledge and technical-scientific training, but also in the ethics and moral fields to face the comprehensive demands inherent to the profession⁽⁴⁾.

In this sense, it is usual for ethical dilemmas and problems to arise in the professional Nursing practice.

Therefore, the ability to make prudent ethical decisions is fundamental. In this context, it is important to develop and explore different methods for teaching Ethics in Nursing training, so that the students can learn to identify ethical problems and propose solutions to them. This learning evolves throughout the undergraduate course. Thus, curricular strategies that expand the students' reflexive ability on ethical issues and contribute to developing moral competence should be implemented⁽⁵⁻⁶⁾.

Educational processes play an important role in achieving Nursing students' ethical education. They contribute to incorporating ethical values that, from the individual perspective, give rise to professional care values and represent commitment and responsibility. Likewise, they consolidate undergraduate training with ethical grounds and knowledge, in addition to enabling students so that they can address and solve the ethical problems inherent to the care provided to people in complex assistance-related environments and prepare them for their future professional life⁽¹⁾. In this sense, the educators' thoughtful commitment is required for Nursing students to develop ethical-moral competences, with a learning process supported not only on the cognitive system but also on the affective dimension of moral behavior. The clinical practice promotes contact with diseases and with real ethical dilemmas and problems and can favor cognitive development and decision-making⁽⁶⁾.

Given the above, the objective of this study is to synthesize the diverse scientific evidence about ethical-moral teaching strategies in Nursing students' training.

Methods

Integrative review developed in six steps: 1) Elaboration of the research question; 2) Search and selection of primary studies; 3) Data extraction from the studies; 4) Critical evaluation of the primary studies included in the review; 5) Synthesis of the review results; and 6) Presentation of the review⁽⁷⁾.

The guiding question was formulated based on

the PICo acronym (P: Population - Students attending Nursing and Health courses; I: Phenomenon of Interest - Ethical-moral strategies in training; Co: Context - Higher education) and reads as follows: Which is the scientific evidence about the teaching strategies that contribute to Nursing students' ethical-moral development?

The search for articles was carried out in January 2024 and the time period considered in the search included materials published between 2018 and 2023. The time period adopted corresponds to the last five full years, with the objective of achieving updated and exhaustive understanding about the state-of-the art in relation to the theme researched. Choice of this period is justified by the importance of recording the recent trends and advances and allowing a deep and contextualized analysis of the diverse evidence available in the scientific literature.

With this background, we sorted and summarized the information in a concise way, creating an easy-to-access-and-manage database with the support of a second researcher to perform a double-blind analysis. The Rayyan® manager for bibliographic references was used from the *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (CAPES) journals portal, via the remote access called *Comunidade Acadêmica Federal* (CAFe).

Publications indexed in the following databases were identified: Web of Science®, PubMed/Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE®), Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL/EBSCO), *Base de Dados de Enfermagem* (BDENF), *Literatura Latino-Americana e do Caribe em Ciências da Saúde* (LILACS) and SciELO. The reasons to choose the databases were based on the researchers' intention, considering the relationship between the topic and the content indexed in national and international studies.

The following inclusion criteria were adopted: articles written in Portuguese, English and Spanish, fully available on the Internet, with no geographical restrictions, including articles whose general and specific objectives were related to the main theme, and that had the following Descriptors in Health Sciences (*Descritores de Ciências de la Salud*, DeCs) and Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) in their titles and/or abstracts: "Ethics" [Mesh], "Students" [Mesh], "Curriculum" [Mesh], "Nursing" [Mesh].

The AND and OR Boolean operators were used in the search for articles; this allowed retrieving more documents and publications, as well as targeting the search to studies related to the literature review topic, in order to encompass all publications in the area of interest. The results obtained in the search strategy are presented in Figure 1.

Database	Search strategy
Web of Science	((“Ethics” OR Ethic* OR “Clinical Ethics” OR “Medical Ethics” OR “Professional Ethics” OR “Ethics, Nursing” OR “Morale” OR “Moral Development” OR “Bioethics”) AND (“Students” OR “School Enrollment” OR “School Enrollments” OR “Student” OR “Education, Nursing, Diploma Programs”) AND (“Curriculum” OR curricul*) AND (“Nursing” OR Nurs* OR “Nurses”))
PubMed/MEDLINE	((“Ethics”[Mesh] OR “Ethics”[Title/Abstract] OR Ethic*[Title/Abstract] OR “Ethics, Clinical”[Mesh] OR “Clinical Ethics”[Title/Abstract] OR “Ethics, Medical”[Mesh] OR “Medical Ethics”[Title/Abstract] OR “Ethics, Professional”[Mesh] OR “Professional Ethics”[Title/Abstract] OR “Ethics, Nursing”[Mesh] OR “Ethics, Nursing”[Title/Abstract] OR “Morale”[Mesh] OR “Morale”[Title/Abstract] OR “Moral Development”[Mesh] OR “Moral Development”[Title/Abstract] OR “Bioethics”[Mesh] OR “Bioethics”[Title/Abstract]) AND (“Students”[Mesh] OR “Students” OR “School Enrollment” OR “School Enrollments” OR “Student” OR “Education, Nursing, Diploma Programs”) AND (“Curriculum”[Mesh] OR “Curriculum” OR curricul*) AND (“Nursing”[Mesh] OR “Nursing” OR Nurs* OR “Nurses”[Mesh] OR “Nurses”))
CINAHL/EBSCO	((MH Ethics+) OR (TI Ethics OR AB Ethics) OR (TI Ethic* OR AB Ethic*) OR (MH “Ethics, Clinical+”) OR (TI “Clinical Ethics” OR AB “Clinical Ethics”) OR (MH “Ethics, Medical+”) OR (TI “Medical Ethics” OR AB “Medical Ethics”) OR (MH “Ethics, Professional+”) OR (TI “Professional Ethics” OR AB “Professional Ethics”) OR (MH “Ethics, Nursing+”) OR (TI “Ethics, Nursing” OR AB “Ethics, Nursing”) OR (MH Morale+) OR (TI Morale OR AB Morale) OR (MH “Moral Development+”) OR (TI “Moral Development” OR AB “Moral Development”) OR (MH Bioethics+) OR (TI Bioethics OR AB Bioethics)) AND ((MH Students+) OR Students OR “School Enrollment” OR “School Enrollments” OR Student OR “Education, Nursing, Diploma Programs”) AND ((MH Curriculum+) OR Curriculum OR curricul*)

(the Figure 1 continue in the next page...)

Database	Search strategy
LILACS	((“Ética” OR “Ético*” OR “Ética Clínica” OR “Ética Médica” OR “Ética Profissional” OR “Ética em Enfermagem” OR “Moral” OR “Desenvolvimento Moral” OR “Bioética” OR “Ética Profissional” OR “Ética en Enfermería” OR “Desarrollo Moral” OR “Ethics” OR ethic* OR “Clinical Ethics” OR “Medical Ethics” OR “Professional Ethics” OR “Ethics, Nursing” OR “Morale” OR “Moral Development” OR “Bioethics”) AND (“Estudiantes” OR aluno* OR “Estudiante” OR “Programas de Graduação em Enfermagem” OR “Estudiantes” OR alumno* OR “Estudiante” OR “Programas de Graduación en Enfermería” OR “Students” OR “School Enrollment” OR “School Enrollments” OR “Student” OR “Education, Nursing, Diploma Programs”) AND (“Currículo” OR “Curriculum” OR curricular*) AND (“Enfermagem” OR “Enfermeiros” OR “Enfermeiras e Enfermeiros” OR enfermeir* OR “Enfermería” OR “Enfermeros” OR “Enfermeras y Enfermeros” OR enfermer* OR “Nursing” OR nurs* OR “Nurses”))
BDENF	((“Ética” OR “Ético*” OR “Ética Clínica” OR “Ética Médica” OR “Ética Profissional” OR “Ética em Enfermagem” OR “Moral” OR “Desenvolvimento Moral” OR “Bioética” OR “Ética Profissional” OR “Ética en Enfermería” OR “Desarrollo Moral” OR “Ethics” OR ethic* OR “Clinical Ethics” OR “Medical Ethics” OR “Professional Ethics” OR “Ethics, Nursing” OR “Morale” OR “Moral Development” OR “Bioethics”) AND (“Estudiantes” OR aluno* OR “Estudiante” OR “Programas de Graduação em Enfermagem” OR “Estudiantes” OR alumno* OR “Estudiante” OR “Programas de Graduación en Enfermería” OR “Students” OR “School Enrollment” OR “School Enrollments” OR “Student” OR “Education, Nursing, Diploma Programs”) AND (“Currículo” OR “Curriculum” OR curricular*) AND (“Enfermagem” OR “Enfermeiros” OR “Enfermeiras e Enfermeiros” OR enfermeir* OR “Enfermería” OR “Enfermeros” OR “Enfermeras y Enfermeros” OR enfermer* OR “Nursing” OR nurs* OR “Nurses”))
SciELO	((“Ética” OR “Ético*” OR “Ética Clínica” OR “Ética Médica” OR “Ética Profissional” OR “Ética em Enfermagem” OR “Moral” OR “Desenvolvimento Moral” OR “Bioética” OR “Ética Profissional” OR “Ética en Enfermería” OR “Desarrollo Moral” OR “Ethics” OR Ethic* OR “Clinical Ethics” OR “Medical Ethics” OR “Professional Ethics” OR “Ethics, Nursing” OR “Morale” OR “Moral Development” OR “Bioethics”) AND (“Estudiantes” OR Alun* OR “Estudiante” OR “Programas de Graduação em Enfermagem” OR “Estudiantes” OR Alumno* OR “Estudiante” OR “Programas de Graduación en Enfermería” OR “Students” OR “School Enrollment” OR “School Enrollments” OR “Student” OR “Education, Nursing, Diploma Programs”) AND (“Currículo” OR “Curriculum” OR curricular*) AND (“Enfermagem” OR “Enfermeiros” OR “Enfermeiras e Enfermeiros” OR enfermeir* OR “Enfermería” OR “Enfermeros” OR “Enfermeras y Enfermeros” OR enfermer* OR “Nursing” OR Nurs* OR “Nurses”))

Figure 1 – Search strategies for the integrative review, by data source. Punta Arenas, Magallanes region, Chile, 2024

The process to search and include articles was carried out by resorting to the following consecutive steps: initial search in the databases; exclusion of duplicate articles; assessment of articles by title and abstract; and assessment of articles by full-reading and removal of those not meeting the review objectives or inclusion criteria.

Articles not available in full-text on the Internet were excluded to ensure methodological quality and analytical depth of the integrative review; full access to the articles is indispensable, as a solid critical synthesis free from biases that would impair validity of the conclusions obtained can only be ensured through a complete evaluation of the data, methods and discussions. The following types of materials were also excluded: editorials, letters, opinion articles, comments, essays, duplicate publications, bulletins, book chapters, prologues, materials published in languages other than Portuguese, English and/or Spanish and

publications not related to the object of this review.

The content analysis was performed as a systematic process that allowed categorizing the main themes found, the discussion and analysis, and obtaining findings and results. The articles were sorted (number, title, author, country, year, main conclusions) and assessed separately. The model proposed by the JBI⁽⁸⁾ was followed to classify the evidence from the studies included.

In order to cover the integrative review stage, we performed a detailed analysis of the articles selected, looking for divergent results or contradictions in the different studies selected, based on the interpretation of the information and the data obtained in the articles. The analysis continued by reading the studies selected, with subsequent sorting and categorization in Microsoft[®] Word, which resulted in the elaboration of a synoptic chart to discuss the knowledge produced, duly structured through a descriptive synthesis.

Results

The five review stages are summarized in Figure 2, according to the selection flowchart and in full compliance with the Preferred Reporting Items for

Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). Figure 3 presents a synthesis of the studies selected with the main information.

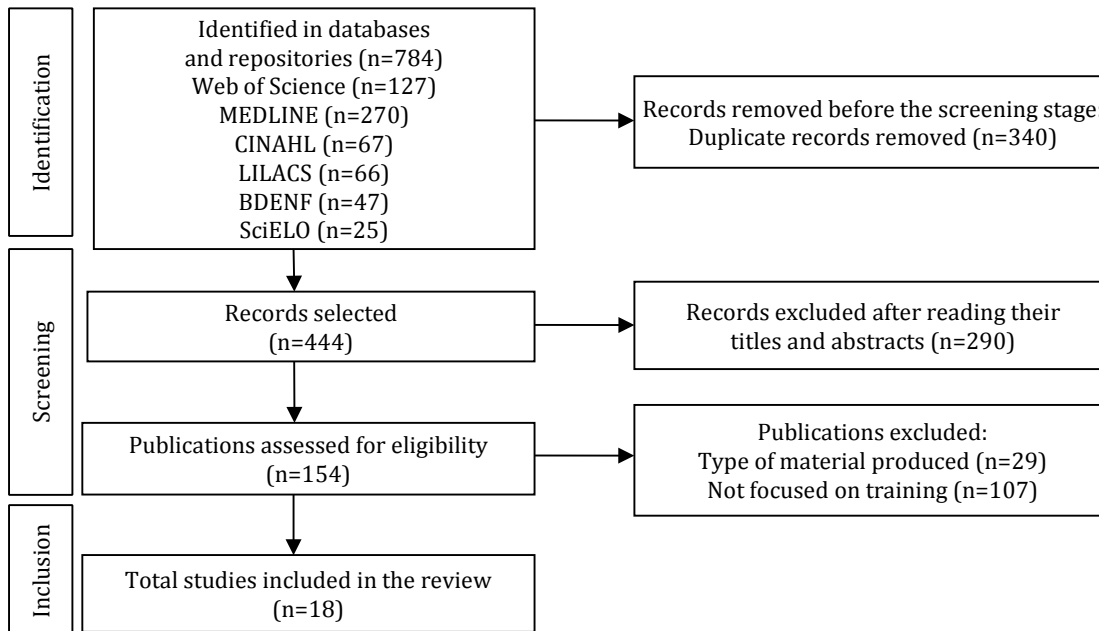


Figure 2 – Flowchart showing the process to search for articles in the databases. Punta Arenas, Magallanes region, Chile, 2024

No.	Authors Country Year	Main conclusions
1 ⁽⁹⁾	Türkmen et al Turkey 2023	Moral sensitivity and affective empathy support the acquisition of professional values in undergraduate Nursing students. When integrating this knowledge, the students achieve better understanding of the professional values.
2 ⁽¹⁰⁾	Jahangasht et al Iran 2023	Experimental ethical teaching in assistance-related environments allows improving cognitive capacity, developing empathy and moral sensitivity, timely identifying ethical problems, improving practices and finding solutions to ethical problems. As a teaching strategy, simulation encourages the students to develop greater empathy and understanding in relation to ethical problems.
3 ⁽¹¹⁾	Bueno et al Brazil 2023	Integrating ethical behaviors for each care action. It requires philosophical grounds and integrating the ethics code into the nurses' practice. The ethical education program is structured with Ethics and Bioethics courses in the first training years, educating on the Nursing Ethics code, regulations and legal norms, and the patients' and Nursing professionals' duties and rights.
4 ⁽¹²⁾	Kaya et al Turkey 2023	As the perception of professional values increases in the students, so do ethical sensitivity and affective and supportive empathetic behaviors. Professional values, ethical sensitivity and care behaviors are interrelated.
5 ⁽¹³⁾	Gherman et al Romania 2022	Integrating educational contents about ethical care and older adults' rights, respect for the principles of autonomy, dignity and human rights. It allows better understanding the ethical Nursing care provided to older adults.
6 ⁽¹⁴⁾	Yilmaz et al Turkey 2022	The training on ethical problems regarding euthanasia prepares the students to face their professional life with values, principles, awareness, common sense and moral reasoning; in addition, it supports them as responsible and ethical professionals that attain greater ethical awareness. The students should be encouraged to state their opinions and questions, establishing dialog and reflexive analysis.
7 ⁽¹⁵⁾	Begjani et al Iran 2022	Grounding ethical stances for better understanding, moral reasoning and ethical sensitivity. Stimulating processes to make decisions linked to ethical changes in the curricula. Integrating courses that teach strategies in Palliative Care and futile treatments, in addition to positive resilience responses.

(the Figure 3 continue in the next page...)

No.	Authors/ Country/Year	Main conclusions
8 ⁽¹⁶⁾	Ortega-Galán et al Spain 2022	Including spaces to foster moral deliberation in complex environments in the curricula, involving euthanasia and related ethical aspects. Educating on euthanasia by means of simulation allows bringing the theoretical knowledge reality closer to the simulated practice one.
9 ⁽¹⁷⁾	Hakbilen et al Turkey 2021	Ensuring ethical education continuity during the entire curriculum of a Nursing education program represents an effective measure to improve the students' awareness regarding ethical sensitivity.
10 ⁽¹⁸⁾	Orr; Romem Israel 2021	Using theoretical education, conferences, narrative videos, dialog, reflexive analysis among students, educators and witnesses of events that have happened in various formats. Allowing to express analytical reflections to the students after the examples presented.
11 ⁽¹⁹⁾	Martins et al Portugal 2020	Education in Bioethics is crucial in the development of critical thinking and decision-making among Nursing students. Dialog and debates among students should be fostered, guided by the professor, in addition to promoting experience exchanges. Educators should be role models for good practices and morally competent to teach moral values and principles.
12 ⁽²⁰⁾	Baker-Townsend; Cummings USA 2020	Training with theoretical and practical contents about moral resilience responses and supporting continuity in the curricular program. Increasing moral strength in critical and high-complexity care units. Educating with resilience responses by means of varied pedagogical techniques that are impactful and long-lasting.
13 ⁽²¹⁾	Arries Canada 2020	The professional ethical values can differ due to various factors that interact in the way they are presented, namely: demographic ones, varied cultural beliefs, different moral ethic stances, and being affected by global and historical social changes. Educators strengthen the teaching of professional values by paying attention to diverse influences from moral philosophical stances.
14 ⁽²²⁾	Pickles et al Australia 2019	Priority should be given to using the best educational strategies on Ethics. The curriculum should promote respect for the value of people's dignity; professional values should prevail in stigmatizing and/or discrimination situations inherent to society.
15 ⁽²³⁾	Nelwati et al Indonesia 2019	Nursing educators should integrate professional values when developing a Nursing curriculum to ensure that the students develop their own understanding about such values and their importance in the practice.
16 ⁽²⁴⁾	Velásquez et al Colombia 2019	It is important to experience virtues in real life, and their learning takes place more through the examples provided than through theoretical teaching. Ethics teaching in Nursing curricula is an issue that should be complemented with role modeling by the teachers of any course during academic training.
17 ⁽²⁵⁾	Xavier et al South Africa 2019	Integrating structured contents on Ethics into the curricula and complementing this with the legal principles and regulations applicable to the health scope to ensure that graduates are well-informed about ethical and legal issues in relation to professional ethical care.
18 ⁽²⁶⁾	Greco et al USA 2019	Simulations are effective educational approaches to develop self-confidence in Nursing students about ethical reasoning and promoting the development of their ethical preparedness in the face of health emergencies with multiple victims.

Figure 3 – Articles included in the integrative review. Punta Arenas, Magallanes region, Chile, 2024

In relation to the level of evidence, seven studies were classified as level 2^(9,13,17,19-21,24), two as level 3^(12,15), five as level 4^(14,16,22-23,26) and four as level 5^(10-11,18,25).

Of the 18 articles that were included in this integrative review, most of them were published in 2019, which accounted for 5 publications (27.7%), observing fewer published studies during 2022 and 2023 with 4 publications each year (22.2%), followed in a lower proportion by the studies from 2020 and 2021.

As for the places where the studies were published, the highest percentage comes from Middle East countries (7 [38.8%]), mainly Turkey with 4 publications, followed by studies conducted in North America (4 [22.2%]), Europe with a lower number (3 [16.6%]) and studies carried out in South America, Asia, Africa and Oceania in a lower proportion.

The studies follow qualitative and quantitative methodologies in the same proportion: 9 (50%) each.

Integrating the studies showed what to develop and how to do so, considering the need to encourage the students to construct their own ethical-moral knowledge. Thus, two categories were created, namely: a) Developing ethical knowledge, skills and attitudes, with the Moral sensitivity, Empathy, Moral resilience, Moral reasoning, Ethical decision-making and Professional values subcategories; and b) Ethical-moral teaching strategies, with the following subcategories: Reflection and debate, Moral deliberation method, Simulations involving ethical problems and dilemmas, Using ethical and bioethical theoretical-philosophical frameworks, Practical experiences and Interactions with patients and family members in health institutions. They are presented in Figure 4.

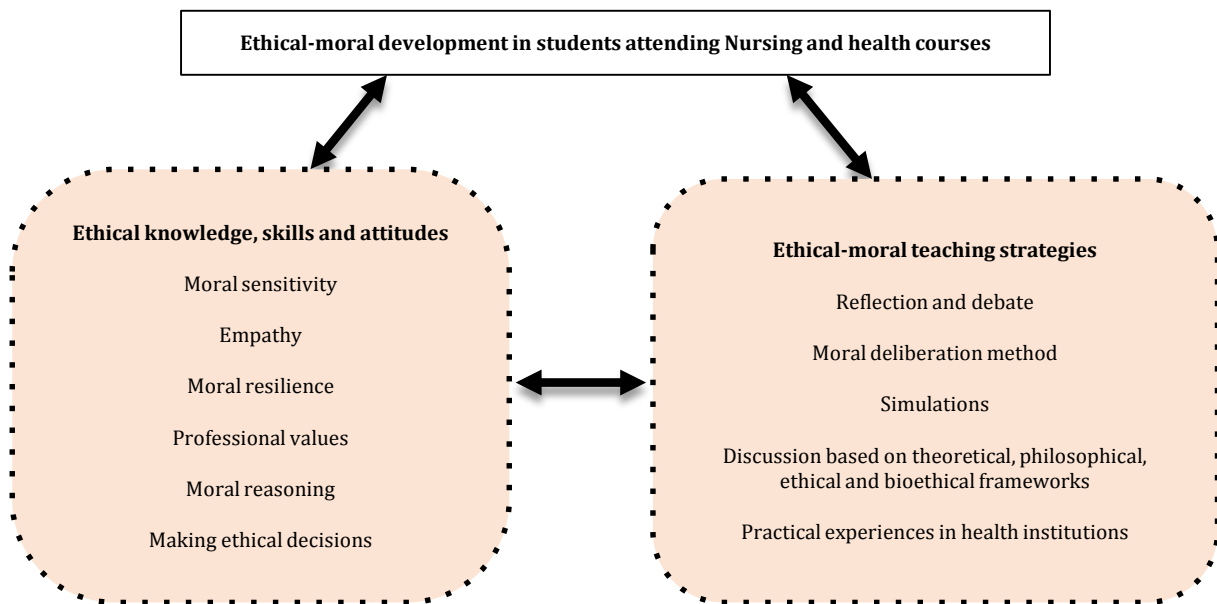


Figure 4 – Representation of categories for Nursing students’ ethical-moral development. Punta Arenas, Magallanes region, Chile, 2024

Discussion

The synthesis of the diverse related evidence showed that, both in the quantitative studies and in the qualitative ones, findings and results were obtained that contributed to implementing improvements for excellence in care and in ethical training teaching, centered on the assistance to be provided to people, society, the world we live in and the future inhabitants of the planet.

In relation to the “Developing ethical knowledge, skills and attitudes”, the review findings show that nurse-educators teaching Ethics in Nursing privilege the desire to train students with diverse knowledge about ethical values, virtues and principles, grounded on ethical-moral philosophies and on the Ethics Code for nurses and on the current health context, which requires deeply understanding the ethical issues related to health care. Their objective is for the students to be able to develop empathy and moral sensitivity behaviors to strengthen their moral identity and, with this knowledge, that they can provide ethical care to the patients requiring it^(9-10,12,15,17).

In this line of thought, in the review it is asserted that training in values is a subject matter that involves all and is constructed throughout life, and that these values are initially learned in the family environment, school spaces and universities^(9,12,14,19,21-23). High ethical teaching standards should prevail in Nursing ethical training; in addition, the students should be given the opportunity to be faced with the professional values, such as in clinical situations involving ethical problems and, for that, develop educational strategies that stimulate critical and reflexive thinking to explore how the students perceive the professional values⁽²¹⁾.

Educators should foster that training in values takes place as a self-construction process in the students, in addition to urging them to undertake such process. The professionals’ and teachers’ behaviors and actions are transcendental, seen as educational models that promote comprehensive, active and gradual ethical education, favoring the construction of the students’ moral identity, which shall be with them during their entire professional career as an ongoing life-long process⁽¹¹⁾.

As for the review findings, it was verified that

empathetic behaviors support the acquisition of professional values in Nursing and promote behaviors marked by greater moral sensitivity. Empathy and moral sensitivity should be promoted continuously, as they help the students to face, address and solve the ethical problems inherent to care by contributing reflexive and prudent solutions that are suitable for health contexts. In health organizations, which are the instances where ethical problems are mostly found and experienced, professional values are promoted both directly and indirectly through the actions and behaviors of advising professors and other health staff members^(9,12-13,17,22).

In this sense, ethical values in Nursing are relevant; nurses attribute prominent and significant importance to constructing values that are identified and recognized by Nursing professionals at the global level^(12-14,16). Nursing values such as respect for human dignity, care measures, health and well-being, responsibility, altruism, equality and confidentiality are universally acknowledged and considered non-negotiable; in addition, they have been regulated in professional ethics codes that convey the shared aspirations and ethical standards inherent to Nursing⁽⁴⁾.

Some values such as human dignity, justice and empathy in the assistance provided guide both the interactions with the patients and their family members and the relationships with the health team. Consequently, ethical-moral training contributes to developing competences that impose reflexive and sensitive attitudes on Nursing professionals, with the purpose of attaining comprehensive and humanized care^(13,22).

Thus, the Nursing profession is organized around shared values and ideologies and unique structural behavioral patterns that support unity of the profession. The society recognizes the Nursing values, identified as inherent to the role and conferring a meaning that transcends its training and goes beyond clinical care. Incorporating humanized and ethical care measures protects human dignity, especially in vulnerability situations^(11,14-15,21-23,25).

Ethical or moral ideologies can enter into con-

flict with the Nursing care professional values and/or with the way in which the Nursing students' answers are presented, considering that such answers can be influenced by demographic and cultural reasons, economic resources, ethical codes, religious beliefs, policies, curricula, and even by the environment of the context where the practices are performed^(9,12-13,15,22). Given these situations, it is essential to consolidate the ethical values and to clarify and reconcile any inconsistency between personal and professional values⁽¹⁰⁾, providing due guidance for the students to develop their own understanding about the values and their importance in the practice.

Thus, it is relevant to stipulate ethical education in Nursing students' moral resilience behaviors, as this constitutes a required dexterity and a means to ensure that they will be able to generate cognitive responses and have emotional control in the face of critical, complex and challenging scenarios. It is essential for Nursing schools to adopt a teaching system that reinforces moral resilience and strength attitudes when facing high-complexity contexts and those marked by situations with a potential to generate moral distress^(15,17-18,20).

Other study findings coincide and highlight that, given any ethical problem context and situation, it is sought that professional ethics prevails. They emphasize that Nursing programs should provide the students with ethical-philosophical contents and fundamentals, promote the development of affective empathy, moral sensitivity, comprehension, openness towards respecting moral values and principles, moral reasoning and decision-making in order to strengthen professional ethical awareness⁽¹²⁻¹⁵⁾.

In the "Ethical-moral teaching strategies" category, the review findings highlight that Nursing Ethics educators wish to incorporate the best pedagogical strategies to encourage the students to face the reality of assistance-related context and address the ethical situations and problems related to the patients⁽¹⁰⁾.

In this argumentation line, the structure of the Nursing Ethics and Bioethics education programs in

Brazil shows that the current challenge faced by ethical education is to integrate ethical behaviors both into the various dimensions inherent to the professional role and into each care, teaching and management action. It is expected that ethical care will manifest itself in all the relationships the students will establish during their training cycle, including their interactions with the patients, their families, the community, interdisciplinarity and the staff in general. In all, it is sought for students to acquire knowledge through a critical and reflexive process with appropriation of ethical attitudes⁽¹¹⁾.

The theoretical bases confer greater clarity to the professional role and identity. Nursing ethical education in Brazil is currently structured in a cross-sectional way in most curricular programs, integrating Ethics into several academic disciplines as a continuum throughout the entire training program, which consolidates professional identity and allows the students to connect with context of the ethical problems that affect society nowadays and favors the nurse-patient relationship⁽¹¹⁾.

As the perception of professional value in Nursing increases, the students' awareness regarding ethical sensitivity and empathetic supportive behaviors is favored. Professors should be capable of generating changes and improving the curricula in the teaching of professional values, as well as of creating structured training opportunities in clinical services, integrating students and educators, and stimulating moral reasoning, sensitivity and supportive behaviors in Nursing care^(12,17).

Some of the review studies also assert that ethical training education should include ethical and legal contents and regulatory norms applicable to the patients' health care, according to their condition and context. In addition, they highlight the use of didactic strategies that favor reasoning and decision-making to solve various ethical problems in the practice, encourage dialog and experience exchanges in deliberation environments, and emphasize the need to support the teachers and advisors for them to become moral-

ly-competent role models of good practices^(11,13,19,25).

Likewise, as a consequence of the results obtained in the research studies included in this review^(9,15,19-23), it is asserted that ethical education in Nursing should be grounded on moral, ethical and bioethical principles, in addition to integrating new ethical contents that exert an influence on the population in the 21st century context.

Bioethics education is a moral construction structure that fosters empathetic behaviors, virtues, values and principles, in addition to stimulating environments marked by dialog, deliberation and prudent decision-making for the sake of the patients' benefit. Integrating Bioethics principles into educational strategies that contribute moral strength to the students before critical and complex contexts prepares them to face scenarios marked by the ethical problems inherent to critical care units. In addition, it is necessary to address a number of existing inconsistencies between the theoretical knowledge taught in the classrooms and the reality of institutional fields, so that both spaces feedback each other instead of competing⁽¹⁹⁾.

In relation to moral reasoning and decision-making, they foster skills modeling and strengthening as an ongoing process, using effective pedagogical strategies, warning that simulations exert a positive impact on moral reasoning because they confer self-confidence and cognitive ethical comprehension to the students, promote making fair, reflexive and ethical decisions and prepare them to solve ethical problems in real-life environments^(16,18-19,26). Educating through simulations stimulates and fosters in the students greater empathy and understanding about the ethical problems experienced by the patients in real-life environments in the nurse-patient-health-organization relationship⁽¹⁰⁾.

Some findings consider the value of education in virtues as essential for ethical training in Nursing, which implies caring for human beings in different health and disease contexts, with ethical responsibility and respect for human dignity. The impact of this training is reflected in the practice of virtues, especial-

ly in the care of vulnerable people, who expect ethics and prudence from the professionals. In times of adversity, excellence in Nursing ethical care should unite science and virtue, providing humanized, ethical and comprehensive assistance^(13-14,24).

In this sense, training in values is up to everyone as an ongoing process constructed throughout life, and this learning starts at the family level to later on extend to the school level, determinant settings to educate and encourage the development of moral values, virtues and principles. University ethical training grounds and consolidates education and the construction of values, virtues and wisdom, all essential for ethical care, in addition to consolidating Nursing students' moral structure, thus exemplifying and shaping qualities that motivate ethical performance marked by professional virtue^(13,19,24).

Another measure considered effective in Nursing students' education is bringing practical and institutional teaching in clinical environments closer together and integrating them, which strengthens understanding of theoretically-taught ethics. Understanding applied ethics allows them to develop greater ethical awareness and empathy, in addition to integrating the moral sensitivity dimension into their life philosophy. This behavior enhances cognitive development and the ability to recognize ethical problems; in addition, it exerts a significant impact of the ethical quality of the care provided to the patients, which fosters behaviors marked by respect for human dignity, advocating for the patients' rights and, in turn, validates their own professional integrity in terms of leadership, self-confidence and empowerment of the professional role^(9-10,13-14,17).

The gaps evidenced in this review reveal the following: scarcity of ethical studies in concealed curricula⁽²⁷⁾; Cybernetics and Artificial Intelligence use⁽²⁸⁾; the need to clarify and strengthen the effect of social determinants linked to health ethics and the patients' rights⁽²⁹⁾; and brain Neuroscience and functionality linked to the responsibility of ethical human care⁽³⁰⁾.

Study limitations

The study was carried out from 2018 to 2023, reason why time might have been limited for the main topic, considering the 2020-2023 period when the highest proportion of research studies developed addressed the COVID-19 theme. In addition, only three languages and six databases were considered in the search. These factors may have limited the results obtained.

Contributions to practice

The results can provide educators with new knowledge that gathers diverse evidence from ethical-moral teaching experiences in Nursing nowadays. A number of criteria to address the problems currently faced by students and educators are presented, contributing educational strategies for Ethics in Nursing that favor this cognitive learning, as well as inspiring contributions for the transformation of behavioral aspects.

Conclusion

The diverse scientific evidence about ethical-moral strategies in Nursing students' training shows that ethical-moral development in Nursing training should incorporate professional values and encourage the development of moral knowledge, skills and attitudes such as moral sensitivity, empathy, moral resilience and reasoning and ethical decision-making. For such purpose, it is necessary to have the ethical-moral teaching strategies highlighted in the studies (such as reflection and debate, moral deliberation method, realistic simulations involving ethical problems and dilemmas, using ethical and bioethical theoretical-philosophical frameworks, and practical experiences and interactions with patients and family members in health institutions).

Acknowledgments

To the *Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico* (CNPq, Brazil) - Funding Code: 406423/2021-0. CNPq/MCTI/FNDCT call No 18/2021 - Band A - Emerging Groups.

Authors' contribution

Conception and design, and data analysis and interpretation: Barrientos MIT, Schneider DG, Mazera MS. Writing of the manuscript or critical review of the relevant intellectual content; final approval of the version to be published and agreement to assume responsibility for all aspects of the manuscript related to accuracy or integrity: Barrientos MIT, Schneider DG, Mazera MS, Sandoval SJA, Bustos EMA.

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